

# Stage spotlights: 'When Momma Prayed,' 'Rhythmically Speaking,' 'Guys and Dolls'

AUGUST 14, 2014 — 3:32PM



MICHAEL DANIEL

A scene from "When Momma Prayed."

## WHEN MOMMA PRAYED

**Ongoing:** Powerful singer and actor Greta Oglesby plays a bereaved wife whose faith pulls her through the loss of her husband (Ansa Akyea) in this gospel musical by playwright and director Darryl Harrell, with music composed by former Prince & the New Power Generation keyboardist Matt Fink. This is a revival of a 2007 production that premiered at Mixed Blood Theatre. Oglesby starred in the landmark production of "Caroline, or Change" at the Guthrie. People rightly travel many miles to hear her sing. (7 p.m. Thu.-Fri., 2 & 7 p.m. Sat. Ends Aug. 30. Hopkins Center for the Arts, 1111 Mainstreet, Hopkins, \$16-\$24, [whenmommaprayed.com](http://whenmommaprayed.com).)  
ROHAN PRESTON

## RHYTHMICALLY SPEAKING

**Thursday-Saturday:** This show annually celebrates the beat within and the dancers who not only want to share it with the world but who also seek to provide historical context for its contemporary iterations. This year's edition features an impressive roster of choreographers, including familiar faces from the world of jazz, hip-hop and modern. Look for fresh works by local artists Karla Grotting, Bboy J-Sun, Erinn Liebhard, Christine Maginnis, Joanne Spencer and Voice of Culture Drum and Dance, plus special guest Michele Dunleavy. (8 p.m. Fri.-Sat., \$18, Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S., Mpls. [www.southerntheater.org](http://www.southerntheater.org).)  
CAROLINE PALMER

# When Momma Prayed blends faith, belief, gospel, and blues

August 7, 2014 by MSR Online

*When Momma Prayed*, which debuted and filled the house at the Mixed Blood Theater in 2007, takes spiritual flight again beginning August 8 at the Hopkins Center for the Arts, enhanced with six pieces of original music created by musician 'Dr. Fink,' (Matt Fink, former co-writer and sideman for years with Prince) and playwright-director Darryl Harrell. Starring Greta Oglesby and a cast of six actors, nine singers, a dancer, and two musicians, the play is an uplifting story about a rural, very poor, black family living in the Deep South in the 1960's. When the father unexpectedly passes away, the family's food and money quickly vanish. Their situation becomes dire, Momma prays, and her prayer is answered in a miraculous way.



**A scene from When Momma Prayed**

The cast all come from, and are professionally rooted in, the Minneapolis theater community. They have performed in venues such as The Lincoln Center in New York, The Guthrie, The Ordway and Penumbra in St. Paul, The Goodman in Chicago, and have performed in major motion pictures, television and music production.

The play contains a blend of soulful singing, gospel, and blues music that is written, produced and performed by nationally recognized musical talent from Minneapolis.

There will be fifteen performances at the Hopkins Center, starting with opening night, 7:00 p.m. Friday August 8. Four Saturday matinee performances will be held at Noon on August 9, 16, 23, with the closing performance the noon matinee Saturday August 30.

Tickets are \$16, \$20, and \$24, with group discounts available by ordering through the Hopkins Center box office. All information about the production is detailed in the website [www.whenmommaprayed.com](http://www.whenmommaprayed.com).

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